

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 4-7 have been amended as follows:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A method of distributing and laying, inside a building, optical fiber cables drawn into the building from a trunk cable, the method comprising passing the optical fiber cables through the inside of a gutter or drain pipe.

Claim 2 (original): The method of distributing and laying optical fiber cables of claim 1, wherein the occupied cross-sectional area of the optical fiber cables passed through the inside of the gutter or drain pipe is equal to or less than 50% of the cross-sectional area of the inside of the gutter or drain pipe.

Claim 3 (original): The method of distributing and laying optical fiber cables of claim 1 or 2, wherein a branch pipe is connected to the gutter or drain pipe, and wherein at the portion where the branch pipe is connected to the gutter or drain pipe, the optical fiber cables passed through the inside of the gutter or drain pipe are gathered at an inner side of the gutter or drain pipe opposite to the connection portion.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method of distributing and laying optical fiber cables of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein a partition plate is disposed inside the gutter or drain pipe.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The method of distributing and laying optical fiber cables of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein a sheath tube is passed through the inside of the gutter or drain pipe, and wherein the optical fiber cables are passed through the sheath tube.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method of distributing and laying optical fiber cables of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein sheath tubes having a plurality of sheath portions laterally coupled together are passed through the inside of the gutter or drain pipe, and wherein the optical fiber cables are passed through the sheath tubes.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of distributing and laying optical fiber cables of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 or 2, wherein a support having concavo-convex portions capable of arranging and supporting a plurality of optical fiber cables is disposed inside the gutter or drain pipe.